

THE SAMS AND EDWARDS FAMILIES  
PAPER WRITTEN BY  
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My research of the Edwards family, specifically Abel Edwards and Polly Potts and their descendants has taken me to a new area of interest.

The inter-married families of Sams and Edwards. This Paper will follow these two families on their migration from Virginia to North Carolina (Pre-1796) to Early to Pre-Tennessee.

There are other surnames that were well known in Virginia, North Carolina and Tennessee such as Tilson, Clouse and Erwin. As of the completion of this paper these surnames have not been researched in great detail. There is also a possibility that these families migrated together with the Sams and Edwards families.

I first found the surname of Sams mentioned in the (1) Edwards Bible (after this will be referred to as EB). The genealogical record within the bible concerning the descendants of Abel Edwards and Polly Potts mentions the marriage between Littleberry Sams and Nancy Edwards born 1777. The only documented occurrence found that mentions the union of Littleberry and Nancy is the EB. This marriage is a problem with in the Edwards research circles because this family can't be found in any other source other than the Edwards Bible. Is there proof other than the Edwards Bible that documents the union between Littleberry and Nancy? Concrete proof, no. Coincidences that proves to this researcher that it is to coincidental for the union to not have taken place, yes.

The book titled, (2) "THE SAMS FAMILY OF VIRGINIA" (after this will be referred to as SFOV) has many clues to the union of Littleberry and Nancy, but unfortunately does not mention the union specifically. To address the possible reason why there isn't any mention of Littleberry Sams and Nancy Edwards other than the written entry in the EB we must turn to two other sources, the book SFOV and the land records of (3) Sullivan County Tennessee.

There are two (2) Littlebury Sams that could be the (1) Littleberry Sams which married Nancy Edwards b.1777, daughter to Abel Edwards and Polly Potts.

(2) Littlebury Sams b.1754, son to William Sams Sr. b.1717 could possibly be the (1) Littleberry Sams that married Nancy Edwards. Making the assumption that this L. Sams b.1754 did marry Nancy Edwards he would have been 41 years of age when Nancy Edwards turned 18. It is a well known fact that woman married very young at times in early America.

{SFOV, PG.23}

Littlebury b.1754 probably died shortly after he was recorded on the tithables (Henry Co. Va.) when he was 16 years of age as there are no records pertaining to him in any county or state.

The above entry might explain why Sams genealogical records don't show the union of (1) Littleberry Sams and Nancy Edwards, Littlebury Sams b.1754 can't be found after 1770.

The other L. Sams is (2) Littlebury Sams b.1773, son of John Sams b.1749. Littlebury Sams b.1773 married Elizabeth Burns in 1793. From this union there was a child named Littlebury Sams b.1811.

The following are some possibilities concerning this L. Sams:

a. (2) Elizabeth Burns might have died after or before the birth of Littlebury Sams b.1811, E. Burns dying before L. Sams b.1811 would make L. Sams b.1811 a

child of another mother maybe (1)Nancy Edwards b.1777. Then the marriage of Littlebury Sams b.1773 and (1)Nancy Edwards b.1777 was obviously not recorded in any other source than the EB. (2)Littlebury Sams b.1811 could have been the child of (Littleberry Sams and Nancy Edwards, Nancy Edwards might have passed away and Littlebury Sams b.1773 then married Elizabeth Burns in 1793.

(NOTE)

2)Littlebury Sams b.1773 before the birth of his son Littlebury Sams b.1811 purchased 160 acres {SFOV, PG.26}, in Sullivan County Tennessee. The

(3)Sullivan County Tennessee Deed Records clearly mentions the deed transaction between Abel Edwards which married Polly Potts, selling 160 acres to a "Littleberry Sams" in 1807. This is a very LARGE coincidence which has occurred. The SFOV states that Littlebury Sams b.1773 purchased 160 acres in 1807 in the same county of Sullivan, and Sullivan Co. Tenn. Deed records state that a Littleberry Sams bought the same amount of acres in the same year. It is a fact that in early Tennessee in the year of 1807 there were only two Abel Edwards in the county of Sullivan, one of which was the father of Nancy Edwards which (1)married Littleberry Sams, the other being the son of Abel Edwards and Polly Potts, Abel Edwards b.1783 and in 1807 he would have been 24. There is no way of knowing today just which Abel Edwards sold 160 acres of land to Littleberry Sams, I believe that there are two reasons which Abel Edwards b.1783 was not the Abel which sold land to L. Sams.

One reason would be there are no deed transactions before the date of 1807 which documents the transaction of the land between Abel Edwards and Polly Potts and their son Abel b.1783.

Secondly Abel b.1783 would be very young to have acquired all of this land with older brothers having first rights on the land if it was given as a gift or legally left to them upon the death of their father Abel Edwards.

Whether the land was sold to Littleberry Sams by Abel Edwards and Polly Potts or their son Abel b.1783 doesn't matter. Littleberry Sams purchased 160 acres from either Abel Edwards and Polly Potts or their son Abel b.1783.

{refer to the land records at the end of this paper for reference}

An even more interesting entry in the SFOV which adds more questions to the Sams and Edwards relation is the mention of a "Martha Edwards" b.1763 which married William Sams Jr. b.1755. This marriage was united in Henry County Virginia. I will remind the reader that Abel Edwards and Polly Potts migrated to the early Tennessee area from Henry County Virginia. This Martha Edwards, assuming that she was at least close to her husbands date of birth would be of the same generation of (1)Abel Edwards b.1739/1755 which married Polly Potts. It could be possible that this Martha Edwards which married William Sams Jr. b.1755 is related to Abel Edwards which married Polly Potts. The above mentioned Martha could be the sister or cousin or maybe the aunt of Abel Edwards. If this is true then we might have proof of the father/uncle or the brother of Abel Edwards. {SFOV PG.44} It is written that the above Martha Edwards was the daughter to a "Thomas Edwards" which died on November 17, 1790 and was a neighbor of John Sams b.1749 which was the father to Littleberry Sams b.1773 the most probable Littlebury Sams to have married (1)Nancy Edwards.

(NOTE)

(2)John Sams b.1749 lived on Turkey Cock Creek in what is now Henry County Virginia. This could be the area where are Edwards lived before they were found on Snow Creek in Henry County Virginia.

(NOTE)

(2)Martha Edwards Sams died on July 19, 1824 at the age of 61 years making her birth date 1763 as shown on her tombstone where she is buried next to her

husband William Sams Jr. in the Sams Family Cemetery, south of Jonesboro, Union County, Illinois.

(NOTE)

(2)William Sams Jr. b.1775 returned to Henry County Virginia to be married to Martha Edwards b.1763 on 223 acres south of now Martinsville and east of Ridgeway on Simon Creek, a branch of Matrimony Creek which flows into the Smith River east of Ridgeway where route 622 now crosses Smith River.

In closing I now believe that (2)Littlebury Sams b.1754 and the (1)Littleberry Sams which married Nancy Edwards to be one and the same person. The reason that this union was not recorded in the Sams Family History is most likely lost to time.

I also now believe that the Martha Edwards b.1763 which married William Sams Jr. b.1755 to be directly related to my 5th great grandfather Abel Edwards which married Polly Potts. I also believe that Martha Edwards father Thomas Edwards to be related and very possibly the father or uncle to Abel Edwards, father to Nancy Edwards b.1777 wife to Littleberry Sams.

I lastly believe that our Edwards lived prior to Snow Creek Henry County Virginia 1783 near the Sams family of Virginia in Henry County and possibly {SFOV PG.23} "Old Rapphannock County in the tidelands, or possibly Spotsylvania County, or lastly Pittsylvania County Virginia".

I do believe that there is much needed research on the Edwards family in early Henry County, specifically researching the possible ancestral tie between Abel Edwards which married Polly Potts and Martha Edwards father Thomas Edwards which died on November 17, 1790.

WRITTEN BY  
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5TH GREAT GRANDSON  
TO ABEL EDWARDS AND  
POLLY POTTS  
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## LAND RECORDS OF ABEL EDWARDS

### ABEL EDWARDS SOLD LAND TO THOMAS JONES

1. March 1780, Sullivan co. North Carolina
  - a. Abel Edwards bought land from Frederick Keiller.{refer to pg.61}
2. April 31, 1798, Sullivan co. Ten.
  - a. Abel Edwards sold land to Thomas Jones.
    1. 50 acres HOLLS R.{refer to pg.64}
3. September 30, 1844, Sullivan co. Ten.
  - a. Thomas Jones sold land to John R. Jones
    1. District 3, 50 acres S HOLLS R.
  - b. SEE NOTE#1

### ABEL EDWARDS SOLD LAND TO RICHARD GLOVER

4. March 1780, Sullivan co. North Carolina
  - a. Abel Edwards bought land from Frederick Keiller.
5. May 15, 1798, Sullivan co. Tenn.
  - a. Abel Edwards sold 50 acres to Richard Glover
    1. 50 acres HOLLS R.
6. August 15, 1808, Sullivan co. Ten.
  - a. Richard Glover sold 50 acres of land to Samuel Jones.
    1. 50 acres of HOLLS R.
7. February 2, 1859, Sullivan co. Ten.
  - a. Samuel Jones sold 50 acres to Squire Jones.
    1. SEE NOTE#2

### ABEL EDWARDS SOLD LAND TO LITTLEBERRY SAMS

8. March 1780, Sullivan co. North Carolina
  - a. Abel Edwards bought land from Frederick Keiller.{refer to pg.61}
9. December 29, 1807, Sullivan Co. Ten.
  - a. Littleberry Sams bought 160 acres of land from Abel Edwards.
    1. 160 acres Holston R.
10. February 21, 1825, Sullivan Co. Ten.
  - a. Littleberry Sams sold 29 1/4 acres to Obadiah Sams.
    1. 29 1/4 acres Hols R.
  - b. SEE NOTE#3
11. October 6, 1838, Sullivan co. Ten.
  - a. Littleberry Sams sold 31 acres to:
    1. John Sams Dec Heirs
    2. Edmond Sams & c
    3. Leroy Sams & c
    4. Susanna Sams & c
  - b. SEE NOTE#4
12. October 6, 1838, Sullivan co. Ten.
  - a. Littleberry Sams bought 31 acres from Wilson Sams.
    1. another occurrence of 31 acres purchased.
13. February 12, 1849, Sullivan co. Ten.

- a. James Sams purchased 31 acres (Int J. Sams dec), from Stacy Richards.
- 14. February 15, 1849, Sullivan co. Ten.
  - a. 31 acres S of HOLLS R. was given to Edmund Carrier by T-Bond from:
    - 1. Anne Sams & c
    - 2. Susanna Sams & c
    - 3. James Sams & c
  - b. SEE NOTE#5
- 15. February 15, 1849, Sullivan co. Ten.
  - a. 31 acres was sold to Edmund Carrier from:
    - 1. Anne & c
    - 2. Susannah & c
    - 3. James & c
  - b. SEE NOTE#5
- 16. September 29, 1854, Sullivan co. Ten.
  - a. Obediah Sams Sr. purchased 31 acres from Edmond Carrier.
    - 1. district three (3)
  - b. SEE NOTE#8

NOTE#1: After John R. Jones received land from Thomas Jones in 1844 could not find a John/John R./J.R. Jones through 1900 as selling land to anyone. The land might have been kept in family, or sold by family members in small acres. We will Probably never know. Also the land might have been willed, or another type of distribution of this land could have happened after 1844. Another possibility's the descendants of John R. Jones left the land and no one bought the land after they left.

NOTE#2: There is no mention of a Squire/or "S" Jones selling land, 50 acres through 1900. This person might have willed this land to his descendants or there was some other type of distribution of this 50 acres after Squire Jones sold it or willed it. Another possibility is that the descendants to Squire Jones just left the land and no one bought the land after they left.

-NOTE#3: There was allot of activity with deeds on February 21, 1825 in Sullivan co. Ten. There might be some correlation between the four (4) different deeds mentioned during this day. I believe that these deeds do have something in common with Littleberry Sams selling 31 acre parcels, which probably was the original land Abel Edwards purchased in 1780.

- 1. There were the following deeds signed on Feb. 21, 1825.
  - a. Obediah Sams 20 acres to John R. Glover
  - b. Obediah Sams 7 acres from A. Vancevender (see Note#7)
  - c. Obediah Sams 29 1/4 acres from Littleberry Sams

-NOTE#4: There were four (4) different deeds completed during this day. There is some kind of association between these four (4) different deeds. Possibly because of a deceased family member. Unknown at this time.

-NOTE#5: (Item 14 and 15) have something to do with one another and the association between the "T-bond" and the deeds of these two (2) items do have some hidden meaning. The names of these people who were involved in (item 14 and 15) are not the same people who are mentioned in (item 11), with exception to Susanna Sams. Susanna Sams mentioned in (Item #11) could be the same person mentioned in (Item 14 & 15). What makes me think that the people mentioned in

(item 11, 14, 15) are some how related, and that these land transactions are probably from the original land that was once owned by Abel Edwards is because Littleberry Sams on October 6, 1838 sold four (4) 31 acre plots to four (4) different people which equal a total of 124 acres, and on February 21, 1825 Littleberry Sams sold 29 1/4 acres which puts the total of 153 acres that Littleberry Sams sold from the original 160 acres which he purchased from his father in law, my 5th great grandfather Abel Edwards. This is under the assumption that the multiple deeds in question are from the original land purchase from Abel Edwards.

-NOTE#6: The earliest land transaction that Littleberry Sams was involved in was the transaction with his father in law Abel Edwards, which he purchased 160 acres. There are only 7 missing acres from the original 160.

-NOTE#7: In note 6 there is mentioned 7 missing acres from the original 160 which Abel Edwards sold to Littleberry Sams. On February 21, 1825 An Obadiah Sams bought 7 acres of land from Abraham Vandevender on the Holston River. Ironically Littleberry Sams ended up selling to an Obadiah Sams 29 1/4 acres on the same day as O. Sams bought 7 acres from A. Vandevender. Could this be some how the missing 7 acres of land and again why are all of these deeds going on at the same time?

I believe that this is very likely the missing 7 acres missing from the total of 160 acres that Littleberry Sams purchased from Abel Edwards in 1807.

-NOTE#8: Obediah Sams Sr. on September 29, 1854 bought land from Edmond Carrier, 31 acres. This 31 acres is probably one of the three 31 acre parcels that Edmond Carrier purchased (see item 14-15) from three different people in 1849.

-NOTE#9: After 1854 (see item 16) there is not another mention of 31 acres parcels sold or conveyed in any other manner. The owners of the 31 acre parcels possibly willed the land to family, or there was some other type of distribution of the acreage. Another possibility is the families who owned the 31 acre parcels left the land and no one bought the land after they left.

-NOTE#10: Littleberry Sams isn't mentioned anywhere in Sullivan County Tennessee after October 6, 1838, (see Item 12).  
Questions:

1. What happened to Littleberry Sams 31 acres which he purchased from Wilson Sams?
2. Who did Wilson Sams purchase his 31 acres from?
3. Why did he sell his 31 acres to Littleberry Sams on the same day that he sold his (4) pieces of land of 31 acres each?

SOURCE PAGE

- 1 EDWARDS BIBLE OWNED AND LOCATED WITHIN THE APPALACHIAN ROOM,  
MARS HILL COLLEGE, MARS HILL NORTH CAROLINA.
- 2 THE SAMS FAMILY OF VIRGINIA (SFOV). WRITTEN BY CRAWFORD SAMS. OUT  
OF PRINT.
3. LAND RECORDS OF SULLIVAN COUNTY TENNESSEE